

HEADQUARTERS, U. S. ARMY SECTION
MILITARY ASSISTANT ADVISORY GROUP, VIETNAM

~~(CONFIDENTIAL)~~

MAGAR-OT (OP)

11 April 1962

SUBJECT: "Lessons Learned" Number 6

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TO: See Distribution

1. GENERAL: During the period 16-19 March, an operation was conducted in the Southwest portion of Phuoc Thanh Sector to effect the relocation of civilians into areas under GVN control.
2. PARTICIPATING UNITS: A regiment minus one battalion was the major participating unit.
3. MISSION: Relocation of civilians who lived in widely dispersed villages and hamlets to areas which are under effective GVN control was the primary mission. Destruction of VC and VC installations encountered was a secondary mission.
4. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: The operation consisted of movement through the Southwest portion of "Zone D" to the villages and hamlets to effect the relocation of the civilians. No scheme of maneuver within commonly accepted tactical parlance was obvious. Participating troops were, however, required to be constantly alert for violent reaction in this VC stronghold area.
5. RESULTS OF THE OPERATION: Approximately 600 civilians of some 150 families were relocated. In addition there were 2 VC casualties with no friendly losses.
6. LESSONS LEARNED:
 - a. MILITARY COMMANDERS IN THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF SUCH OPERATIONS MUST UNDERSTAND AND APPRECIATE THE VALUE AND USE OF CIVIC ACTION TEAMS. Failure to include their activities in planning and to give all available support to their activities during execution negates the value of such operations. The importance of winning the people must be understood by all military commanders and the provincial authorities. Military civic action must be emphasized to insure an improved attitude toward the military by relocated civilians.
 - b. THERE MUST BE A SINGLE COMMANDER DESIGNATED TO CONDUCT THE MILITARY PHASE OF THIS TYPE OPERATIONS. He must control and have full authority over both the participating military and civil elements.
 - c. RELOCATION OPERATIONS SHOULD BE A PART OF AN OVERALL PLAN TO ENSURE MOST EFFICIENT UTILIZATION OF ALL AVAILABLE RESOURCES. Should it become necessary to conduct relocation operations not included in the master plan, they must have adequate resources allocated to successfully conduct the operation and "win" the people.

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d. PRELIMINARY PHASES OF OPERATIONS OF THIS TYPE SHOULD INCLUDE INITIAL LAYOUT AND PREPARATION OF RELOCATION VILLAGES, AGRICULTURAL TRACTS AND EVEN THE CONSTRUCTION OF BUILDINGS FOR FAMILY OCCUPANCY. Secrecy in this aspect is not important. The "selling point" is that if civilians know that areas are already prepared, voluntary resettlement may result on the part of loyal citizenry, considerably easing the task during the military phase of the resettlement operation.

e. CIVIC ACTION MUST BE CONTINUOUS TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING STAGES: INITIAL PREPARATION OF THE CIVILIANS, MILITARY PHASE OF RELOCATION, MOVE TO THE RELOCATION CENTERS AND IT MUST REACH ITS PEAK AT THE RELOCATION CENTERS. All possible measures should be taken to gain cooperation and support of the relocated civilians and should include as a minimum; explanation, orientation, aid in construction of quarters and village buildings (if not already provided), medical and sanitation assistance and the reestablishment of family and village economy. All possible measures to gain the support of the civilians should be exploited, since without the ultimate support of the civilians, regardless of numbers of people relocated, the operation will be ineffective. Such ineffective operations result in unfavorable propaganda which will jeopardize future operations of this type which have been properly planned.

7. The foregoing is provided for your information and guidance.

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